

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7328

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AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 9362

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, CO

SUBJ: KOREA AT 31ST UNGA: COLOMBIA COSPONSORSHIP OF
FRIENDLY RESOLUTION

REF: STATE 220773 BOGOTA 8475

1. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDED ACTION:

DESPITE NUMEROUS REPRESENTATIONS BY US, KOREAN EMBASSIES AND
OTHER INTERESTED GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS, FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO
HAS REMAINED ABAMANT IN HIS DECISION TO VOTE FOR BUT NOT TO
COSPONSOR FRIENDLY RESOLUTION. LIEVANO'S UNEXPECTED DEPARTURE
ON SEPT 13 FOR G-77 MEETING IN MEXICO CITY EFFECTIVELY ENDS
ANY FURTHER POSSIBILITY OF INFLUENCING HIS DECISION IN COLOMBIA.
WE BELIEVE THAT PERSONAL INTERVENTION BY SECRETARY WITH
LIEVANO IN THIS ISSUE WOULD STAND GOOD CHANCE OF SUCCESS. END
SUMMARY

2. LIEVANO HAS PERSISTED IN HIS DECISION TO VOTE FOR BUT NOT
COSPONSOR FRIENDLY RESOLUTION, BASED ON PREMISE THAT
COLOMBIA HAS NEITHER INTERESTS NOR INFLUENCE IN EAST ASIA
AND, PROBABLY, INFLUENCED BY DESIRE TO AVOID OR REDUCE
COLOMBIAN IDENTIFICATION WITH COMPETING "BLOCS". DURING
PAST WEEKS US AND KOREAN EMBASSIES, IN CONSULTATION, HAVE
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MADE NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS TO FOREIGN MINISTRY ON COLOMBIAN

COSPONSORSHIP OF FRIENDLY RESOLUTION AND HAVE ENLIGHTENED THE SUPPORT OF INFLUENTIAL PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS. USING TALKING POINTS PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT, EMBASSY HAS MADE SEVERAL REPRESENTATIONS EACH TO FOREIGN MINISTRY UNDERSECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS NAVAS AND TO ACTING UNDERSECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS BONILLA (MEMBER OF COLOMBIA'S 31ST UNGA MISSION). WE HAVE ALSO LOBBIED WITH PRESIDENT OF SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE URIBE, CONSERVATIVE SENATOR EMILIANI (ALSO A MEMBER OF UNGA MISSION) AND FORMER AMBASSADOR TO U.S. TURBAY. TURBAY IS CHIEF OF LIBERAL PARTY POLITICAL FACTION WITH WHICH BOTH LIEVANO AND URIBE ARE ASSOCIATED. EMILIANI HAS SAID HE WOULD ARGUE COSPONSORSHIP IN NEW YORK. KOREANS HAVE FOLLOWED SIMILAR ROUTE IN THEIR REPRESENTATIONS. KOREANS HAVE TOLD US THAT FORMER MPRESIDENT PASTRANA, AS PRESIDENT OF COLOMBO-KOREAN FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION, ALSO URGED COSPONSORSHIP ON LIEVANO. WE UNDERSTAND THAT TURBAY HAS ALSO RECOMMENDED COSPONSORSHIP WITH LIEVANO ON TWO OCCASIONS, MOST RECENTLY ON SEPT 11, PROBABLY LIEVANO'S LAST CONVERSATION ON THIS SUBJECT PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE TO G-77 ON SEPTEMBER 13. LIEVANO REPORTEDLY TOLD TURBAY THAT HE "WOULD THINK ABOUT IT", A REPLY WHICH, IN THE CONTEXT, WE INTERPRET TO BE NEGATIVE. LIEVANO'S DEPARTURE, ON SHORT NOTICE (TURBAY WAS SCHEDULED TO ATTEND THE G-77 BUT AT LAST MINUTE BEGGED OFF), OBVIATED POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER PLANNED REPRESENTATIONS, WHICH WERE TO INCLUDE SEPARATE DEMARCHES TO LIEVANO BY US AND KOREAN AMBASSADORS.

3. FYI: PRIOR TO 30TH UNGA, LIEVANO HAD MADE SIMILAR DECISION TO VOTE FOR BUT NOT COSPONSOR FRIENDLY RESOLUTION BUT EVENTUALLY WAS PREVAILED UPON TO COSPONSOR. ACCORDING TO FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES, WHAT FINALLY CHANGED LIEVANO'S MIND WAS AN UNABASHED APPEAL BY KOREANS THROUGH INTERMEDIARIES THAT THE THEN NEWLY ASSIGNED KOREAN AMBASSADOR, IN HIS FIRST DIPLOMATIC ASSIGNMENT (HE WAS FORMERLY CHIEF OF STAFF OF ROK AIR FORCE), WOULD HAVE FAILED TO SUCCEED IN THIS MATTER OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO HIS GOVERNMENT. THE CONCEPT OF ORIENTAL "FACE" WAS INVOKED.

4. ACTION RECOMMENDED. DEPENDING ON DEPARTMENT'S INTEREST IN OBTAINING COLOMBIA'S COSPONSORSHIP, THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT THE SECRETARY MEET WITH LIEVANO IN NEW YORK AND REQUEST COSPONSOR-
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SHIP. LIEVANO TAKES PRIDE IN HIS PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SECRETARY AND HE IS A MAN OF CONSIDERABLE VANITY. WE BELIEVE THAT SUCH A REQUEST WOULD HAVE A BETTER THAN EVEN CHANCE OF SUCCESS AND THAT NOTHING LESS WILL OBTAIN COLOMBIAN COSPONSORSHIP.
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